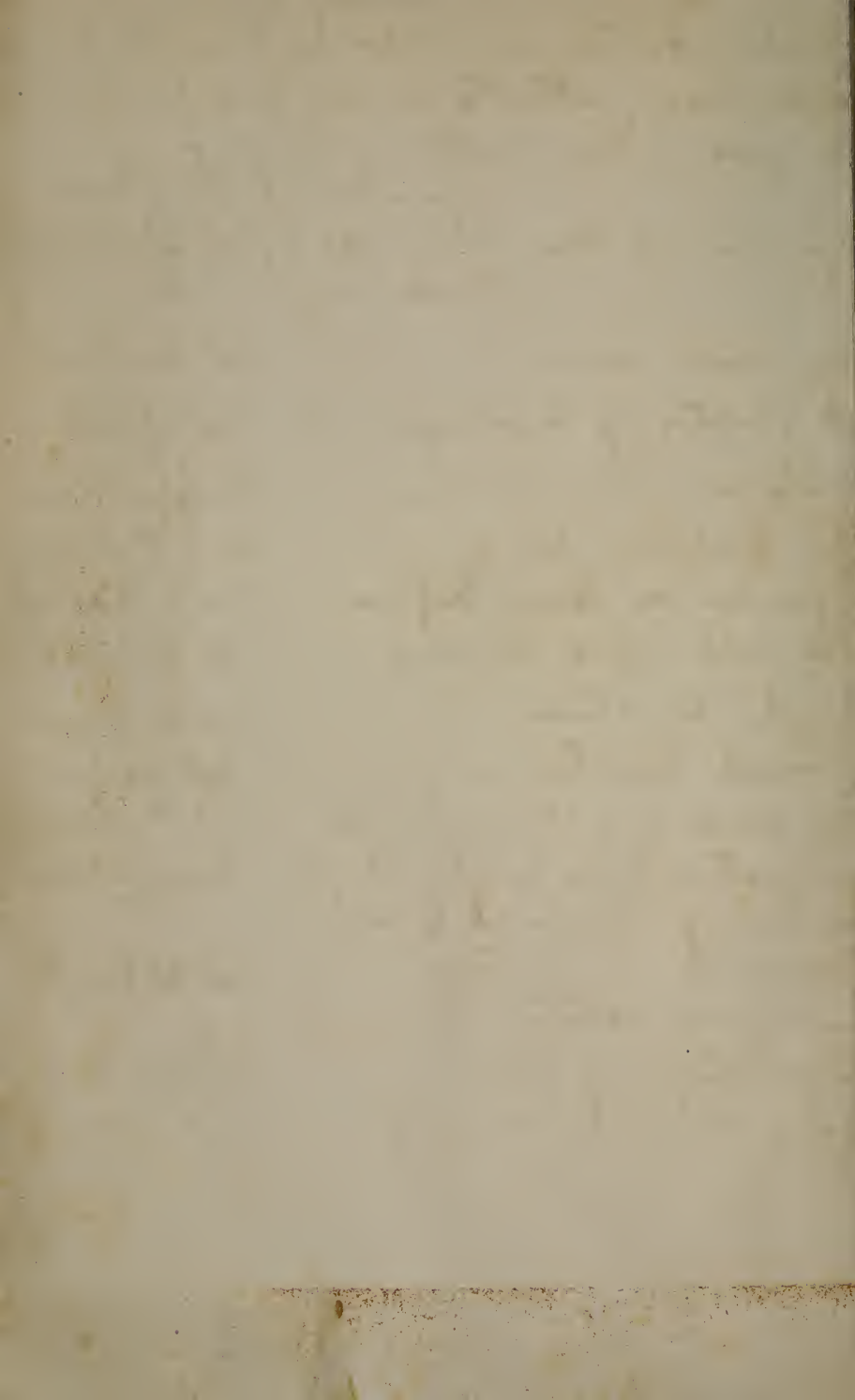




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Mul. Table 1.
from his loving wife
St. Matthias' Key
1865

The Study of Modern History
in London.

A LECTURE

BY THE

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DELIVERED BEFORE THE

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IN EXETER HALL,

JANUARY 31, 1854.

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1882

THE STUDY OF MODERN HISTORY.

It was a great satisfaction to me to find, after choosing this subject for a Lecture, that it was the very one which had been commended to your special attention by the distinguished man who has done you and us the honour of opening this course of Lectures by advice on the best mode of systematic reading; and I trust that in what I am about to say there will be nothing inconsistent with the spirit of his remarks.

I need not waste words on the great importance and interest of Modern History—of History altogether, as the link which binds together the successive generations of mankind—of Modern History in particular, as that of which we ourselves form a part. But when I come to speak of the study of it, the same question, doubtless, will occur to every one—How can we hope to grapple with such an immense subject? On the one hand, detailed histories of the whole extent of English or of European history are entirely beyond our reach; on the other hand, short abridgements and compendiums are so dry and meagre, that we hardly learn anything from them. To a certain extent this difficulty is insurmountable. If we would know History fully, we must bestow much time upon it; if we wish to

know it compendiously, we must be content to lose half its instruction, and almost all its attractions.

Still, there is a remedy arising from the very nature of History itself, which, as soon as we are reminded of it, we can apply for ourselves. In history, as in everything else, it is a great mistake to look upon everything that is told us as of equal importance. Here, as elsewhere, there are some points which concentrate and condense in themselves whole masses of inferior events; so that, if we know them thoroughly, we shall be able to know a vast number of lesser objects, before, and behind, and around us, which those greater points involve. If we can get hold of any one point of this kind, it is like ascending to the top of some commanding height, over a large city or country: what seemed all confused and unintelligible whilst we were in the streets or the plain now assumes its proper proportion and meaning. One hour of such a view is worth days of minuter investigation amongst the various objects which we now see unrolled before us as in a map. Abridgements which should, as it were, leap from one such eminence to another, describing particular epochs, persons, events, places, with great fulness, and passing slightly over the dreary wastes of intervening periods, might be full, not only of instruction, but of amusement and interest.

What, then, are these points, and which shall I select? I might take one or more of those great epochs which contain within themselves the secrets of the whole of the rest of Modern History. Or, I might take some one great event or scene which represented each one of those epochs, describing it in all its details, and showing in what relation it stood to the rest of the age. Or, I might take some one great character; a thousand ordinary men go, it is said, to make up one hero—and so, by understanding perfectly that one saint or hero, you understand all the thoughts and feelings that in his

great character were wrapt up and expressed. Or, I might take the history of some one great place—some scene where great events have been performed—where great men have lived and died—where by the thousand threads of local associations we are insensibly brought within the recollections of the past, and introduced into its very presence.

I have mentioned all these modes that they may serve as landmarks for your reading, if any of you are so disposed. I mention them all with the general advice, which the mention of them of itself involves,—“Take care of the great events, and the little ones will take care of themselves.”

But in my own selection this evening I have been guided by the wish to take one of these points on which I might presume all of my hearers to be more or less familiar. I therefore propose to view the study of Modern History through the eyes, if I may so say, not of a great age, or event, or man, but of a *great place*. And here I feel sure that you will anticipate me in the selection of the place which I shall choose as my instance. Whatever might be the mode by which I should enforce or illustrate the study of Modern History elsewhere, *here* I can have no doubt that it ought to be by the study of LONDON.

It is the peculiar compensation to the inhabitants of a city like this, that what others gain from the study and enjoyment of Nature, you may gain from the study and enjoyment of History. What geology, mineralogy, and botany, are to the dwellers in rustic parishes, that History is to the occupants of streets, the neighbours of houses, whose very names are famous. The pleasure which a botanist finds in the flowers along the common pathways of his daily walks—the pleasure which the geologist finds in hills, and valleys, and roads, and railroads, as if their very sides were hung with beautiful pictures, which to him alone are visible—this same pleasure is given to the historian

as he looks at the buildings, as he sees the names, of even the commonest streets in London. He sees there what others see not; and, as the structure of the earth to a student of geology becomes an orderly and beautiful system instead of a disjointed mass of stone and earth. so London, to a student of History, instead of a mere collection of bricks and mortar, becomes a book in which the history of the past is written on every street, and in every square, as in the pages of some richly-illuminated volume.

Let me, then, so far as the present time will allow, unfold this book before you, and show you how in it some of the most striking lessons of History may be conveyed, where, perhaps, you may least expect to find them.

Before I go into any detail, let me make two remarks which apply to London as a whole. First, the mere fact of its grandeur—of its vast size—of the ceaseless stir and excitement of its daily and hourly life—is an assistance to the comprehension of History far beyond what those can have who live away from it. It raises us out of ourselves—it gives us a consciousness of nearness to the great pulses of national life. No thoughtful person, who can remember his first entrance into London, can fail to look back upon it as an epoch in his life. To have seen, for the first time, that countless tide of human beings—to look, for the first time, from one of the bridges, or from any height, within or around the city, over the vast region, rather than town, which is included within the name of “London”—is a shock like that which the Englishman experiences when, for the first time, he lands amidst the unwonted sights and sounds of a Continental port,—which the European traveller experiences when, for the first time, he encounters the strange, yet familiar, images of an Eastern land. London, as has been truly said, however deficient in splendour or beauty, is yet, by the mere fact of its immense

size, "sublime with the sublimity of sea or of mountains." It conveys, to any one who views it in connexion with its History, the same elevating and ennobling feelings which sea or mountains give to those who live within their reach. It teaches us, in this respect, exactly that lesson of humility and of moderation which we ought to derive from the magnitude and many-sidedness of famous events and famous men.

But, secondly, there is another circumstance in the historical aspect of London which, at first sight, might seem to detract from its interest, but which still has a peculiar lesson of its own to tell us. You must not expect to find in London what you find in many Continental cities—the actual scenes of many great events. Look over the history of England, and you will find that, except the State-trials, imprisonments, executions, and meetings of Parliament, hardly any great event has happened in London. Look, on the other hand, over the history of France, and you will find that hardly any great event has—at least in later times—happened out of Paris. What a key is this to the characters, the feelings, the revolutions, of the two countries! We see, by a glance at Paris, how entirely France is the nation of a great city; we see, by a glance at London, how entirely London is the city of a great nation. We see this, and we feel at once its importance to our whole mode of regarding the relations of the capital to the country. We feel that, great as London is, England is a thousand times greater; our pride and our thankfulness is, not that we are Londoners, but that we are Englishmen; not that *we* rule the country, but that the country rules *us*; and that in the welfare of that common country the highest nobleman, the busiest citizen, the most retired rustic, has, I will not say an equal, but certainly a deep and a common interest.

And now, from these two general remarks on this great

book of English history, which all of you have, as it were, in your hands whilst I speak,—from these two remarks, telling you what you are, and what you are not, to expect in its pages,—let me open those pages and go through them, not, indeed, in detail, but selecting such parts as chiefly bear on the subject now before us.

First, as in all history, we must go back as far as we can, and find that basis on which it must always rest, namely, its geography. No one can ever gain a clear notion of historical events without a clear notion of the ground on which they have been enacted: and this is specially important with regard to capital cities. Ask always what was the reason why this or that place should have been selected as the metropolis of a great nation, and you will, in all probability, have learned one chief characteristic of the nation itself. Was there anything of the kind in the situation of London? Was there anything which might have taught a Druid of ancient times what was in store for his coming country, as he sat where we are now assembled?

Let us for a moment try to see London as he then saw it. A long range of rising ground, covered with a vast forest, full of wild deer, wild boars, and wild bulls—descending from what are now the hills of Hampstead in a gradual slope to a broad river, steeply on the east, through a deep morass on the west—a few streams rushing down from the hills, through the woods, into the river—this was the most ancient form of London. Most of these features it is difficult now even to imagine, much less to recognise; yet some of them still linger where you would least expect.

In the depths of the city you may remember one of the most beautiful of Sir Christopher Wren's churches—St. Stephen's, Walbrook. By that church there flows the *Brook of London Wall*—the *Wall-brook*—which still rushes down with such a torrent that a workman, clearing the sewer

which it now forms, was once carried away by it. Every one knows Holborn Hill, but how few remember that it takes its name from the *Old Bourne* or stream which, rising in High Holborn, ran down that steep declivity, and turned the mills at *Turnmill*, or Turnbull Street, at the bottom,—the River of Wells, as it was sometimes called, from those old consecrated springs which now lie choked and buried in Clerken *Well*, and Holy *Well*, and St. Clement's *Well*. *Fleet Ditch*, *Fleet Street*, *Fleet Market*—all mark the course of the brook, called, from its rapidity, the Fleet, rising far away in the breezy slopes of Hampstead. Tyburn, in like manner, is the brook of the *Tye*, or *Aye*, which, after giving name, first, to Mary-le-bourne (now corrupted into Mary-bone), and then to Upper and Lower *Brook Street*, and running under the *mount* of Mount Street, and under "*Hay*," or, as it used to be called (from this stream) "*Aye Hill*," ran out through the Green Park, and spread into the western morass of which I spoke before. That morass occupied the whole of what is now Belgravia,—which, as you know, has been but recently reclaimed,—and the still older marsh inclosed between the river and the Long Ditch which once gave its name to what is now Great George Street in Westminster, and so formed a marshy island, overgrown with thickets, whence it was called Thorney Island, on which rose, in after days, Westminster Abbey.

Now, when you think how completely most of these natural features have been obscured, you may wonder what connexion they can have with any subsequent history of the great city which has grown out of them. But, even if there were no direct connexion, there is still something almost affecting in the thought that, after all, we are not so far removed from our mother earth, from natural influences, as you might suppose. There is something of a quaint and touching interest to remember that the great arteries of our

crowded streets, the vast sewers which cleanse our habitations, are fed by the life-blood of those old and living streams—that underneath our tread the Tyburn, and the Oldbourne, and the Fleet, and the Wall-brook, are still pursuing their ceaseless course—still ministering to the good of man, though in a far different fashion than when Druids drank of their sacred springs, and Saxons were baptized in their rushing waters, centuries and ages ago.

But amidst all these changes there is one natural feature which remains the same—the River Thames—the largest river in England—here widening to an almost majestic size, yet not too wide for thoroughfare—the direct communication between London and the sea, on the one hand, between London and the inland counties on the other. When roads were bad, when robbers were many, when the forests were still thick—then, even more than now, the Thames was the great highway of English life—the great inlet and outlet of English commerce. Here, from the very earliest times, the coracles, or wicker-boats, of the British tribes, the galleys of the Roman armies, were moored, which gave to the place its name—now through its thousand masts and funnels far more appropriate than in its first origin—the *city of ships*. Such is the probable meaning of the name of *London*, which it bore as early as the first century of our era, when it first appears in the pages of Tacitus, even before the birth of Modern History. Such was the situation which ultimately fixed its supremacy over all the other towns which have at various times claimed to be capitals of England—York, Canterbury, and Winchester,—such the omen which it gave, even at its very birth, of being the seat of the greatest maritime empire which the world has ever seen. The Thames is the parent of London. The chief river of England has given birth, by a natural consequence, to England's greatest city. The old historic stream, which gathered on

the banks of its upper course Oxford, Eton, Windsor, and Richmond, had already, before the first beginning of those ancient seats of learning and of regal luxury, become on these its lower banks the home of England's commerce and England's power.

This is the chief natural element of London connected with its subsequent growth; but the others which I mentioned have not been without importance in determining the rest of its fortunes. The slight rising grounds on the east naturally became the seat of the city. *Corn Hill*, *Tower Hill*, and *Ludgate Hill*, still remind us that the old London, like all fastnesses and capitals, took advantage of whatever strength their natural situation afforded; and, therefore, as you go up to *Corn-Hill*, the original seat of British chiefs and Roman governors, as you feel the ground swelling under your feet when you begin the ascent from *Fleet Street* to *St. Paul's*, or as you see the eminence on which stands the *Tower of London*, the oldest, and once the chief palace and fortress of our English kings, you have before you the reasons which fixed what is properly called the "*city*" of London on its present site. There the first dwellers of the land looked down on the river beneath; drank of the fresh rivulets in the winding valleys which intersected their earthen bulwarks: the deep ravine of the *Fleet* protected them on the west—the rushing *Wallbrook* on the east; behind them was the great forest, with its savage beasts; before them was the *Thames*, then spreading far and wide over what were then the lakes and marshes of *Lambeth* and *Southwark*. And when from these heights, if I may so call them, you descend to the level plain, and ask how it is that the seat of government was transferred from these eastern eminences to that remote corner in *Westminster*, where it is now fixed; there again the original cause may be found in the wild morass—the

thorny thickets which occupied the ground eighteen hundred years ago. The one nucleus and centre of the whole of what we now call Westminster is the great Abbey, of which the first foundation was laid by a Saxon king in the seventh century; and the situation of that Abbey, as of most monastic institutions, was probably fixed by the nearness to the river side, whence they could receive provisions with less trouble and difficulty; and also by the jungle and marsh, which made the island on which they were settled a natural refuge from the savage marauders who then infested the country. And round the Abbey, thus entrenched within its deep morass, gradually sprang up, first, the favourite Palace of the sovereigns, who felt more secure under the shadow of the great sanctuary than even in their own fortress in the Tower, and then within the walls of the Palace, the "Chambers"—the "Houses"—first one, and then both "Houses" of Parliament, which have now grown in power and grandeur till they have absorbed the whole site of that ancient habitation of their sovereign.

If there are any Scotchmen here present,—if any who have visited the beautiful capital of the sister kingdom, it may help you to understand what I have said about London, if I compare it with the same features exhibited on a smaller scale—but still more forcibly—in Edinburgh. There you will remember the Castle on its high rock, corresponding to Cornhill and the Tower of London,—then the houses of the nobles, in the High Street, corresponding (as I shall afterwards show you) to our Strand,—then the old Palace of the Scottish kings, in the Abbey of the Holy Cross, or Holy Rood, which, like Westminster, stood in early times amidst what was once a thick forest.

I have dwelt longer on this original aspect of London than, perhaps, its intrinsic importance deserves, because it is never out of place to trace back to its very first causes the

origin of what has since become famous—because the influence thus exercised over our history by the natural features of our capital city is an index of that constant interweaving of God's Providence with man's efforts, of which all History is composed. On the one hand, without its river, without its morasses, without its fresh streams, without its gentle eminences, London would not have been what it is ; but, on the other hand, without the energy, and the courage, and the piety, first of the Roman colonists, who chose this as their harbour,—then of the Saxons, then of the Normans, then of the great English empire,—without all this, the Thames and its tributary brooks would have flowed in vain,—the hills of Ludgate and the Tower would have remained steep banks of London clay,—the place where the most august assembly of the world is at this moment debating the fortunes of Europe and of Asia would still have been an impenetrable thicket in a pestilential marsh.

This is one advantage of studying History through the medium of a great place like London—that it takes us back to the time before History began, and out of which it sprang. Another advantage is, that it enables us, perhaps, more vividly than anything else, to imagine the difference between our times and those which have gone before. Doubtless, we are in many important points the same as were our ancestors. We are men, we are Christians, we are Englishmen, as they were. But we do not enough remember how differently, in many points, they must have placed things before their minds—what different ideas the same objects, the same words, the same names in religion, in politics, in nature, in art, must have suggested to them and to us. One easy and ready mode of thus recalling the past, at least in its outward form, is by familiarity with the relics which it has left, few and far between, in an ancient city like this.

But, perhaps, before I go further, I ought to remind you of one melancholy cause why the old City of London contains so much less of these past recollections than any other city equally ancient; and that is, the great Fire which raged for four long days and nights in the disastrous year of 1666. And, in speaking of this great Fire, I cannot forbear to remind you of some of the historical lessons which it teaches us. One is, that though it destroyed much it cleared away much. If it carried away fine old churches, and beautiful wooden houses, and dark winding alleys, it also carried away the Plague. The Plague, which raged in the spring of that year, has never attacked us since—and that blessing we owe, in great measure, to the clearance made by the Fire. So it is that there always is a compensation in human events—no evil comes without its good, no good without its evil. Let us make the best of both.

Another lesson that the Fire teaches us is, what is contained in the story of the great pillar which is called the Monument. That pillar, which stands at the entrance of *Pudding Lane*, where the Fire began, as by an odd and well-known coincidence it ended in *Pie Corner*, was the Monument of which Pope speaks, when he says—

“ Like a tall bully, lifts its head and *lies*.”

It *lies* now no longer. The lie which it once told was a ridiculous calumny—that the city was burnt (so the inscription ran) “by the malice and treachery of the Popish faction,” who were at that time even more unpopular with the mass of our countrymen than they are now. The inscription which recorded this was erased about twenty years ago. The Monument, therefore, now remains a happy instance of what it is often the privilege of history to record, an instance of at least one cause of needless irritation gone

to the abyss, whence it will no more return,—a proof that truth and justice have no need of support from folly and falsehood.

But now let me very briefly go through such points as escaped the Fire, and as may best recall to us the successive stages of Modern History with which London has kept pace.

First, there is the earliest beginning of London and of England—when the armies of the Roman conqueror lifted up the veil which concealed Britain from the rest of the world. Last week you heard of the noble deeds and words of the touching life and tragical death of the Roman orator Cicero. Is there anything which can recall him or his countrymen to your thoughts as you pass to and fro through the crowded thoroughfares of London? In the churchyard of St. Giles's, Cripplegate (a church famous for the burial and the marriage of two of our greatest men in later times—the burial of Milton and the marriage of Cromwell), many of you may have seen—but many of you, perhaps, have never seen—the venerable remains of the old Roman wall imbedded in the huge bastion of later times, as truly a fragment of Roman workmanship as the columns that are now standing in the Forum, or the aqueducts that still stretch their melancholy and majestic lines along the desolate Campagna. And if you chance, as you walk up Cannon Street, to cast a glance, on your left-hand side, at the wall of St. Swithin's Church—you will there see, in the ancient fragment called *London Stone*, a memorial of the manner in which that mighty nation carried their customs everywhere throughout the world. That stone was the central stone, or terminus, from which radiated out in all directions those magnificent roads, running straight as an arrow over hill and valley, north, and west, and south, and east, for which the Romans were so justly celebrated—the great instruments by which they replenished, and subdued, and

civilised, the nations that were subject to their sway. Such a stone—called the Golden Milestone—stood in the Roman Forum amidst all the splendour of the statues, and temples, and triumphal arches, which adorned that glorious scene. Such, on a miniature scale—making London, even in that its first infancy, so far as they could, a copy of their own great capital—is the stone which you can still see, and feel, and touch, in the heart of what is now grown to be the greatest city, except Rome, that has ever yet arisen.

These relics of Roman times lie barely within our subject—but they are on the threshold of Modern History, though not within the province of Modern History itself; and they are for this very reason important, as reminding you that out of Ancient History Modern History rose—that the study of Greece and Rome is indispensable to a full knowledge of the growth of our own country, and constitution, and religion. They are the witnesses, in the midst of the roar and whirl of modern times, to the importance and the value to our history and to our education of what we call Classical Studies.

From this remote age let us come nearer to our own time. I will not detain you in the periods of British, of Saxon, and Danish history, further than to give you two or three instances which may, at least, give a transient gleam of interest to names and streets which connect us with those distant epochs.

I know not whether the British period is too obscure to justify any allusion. What traces there are of its existence can at best be very doubtful; yet I cannot altogether forget that St. Peter's, Cornhill, claims to stand on the most ancient consecrated ground in England; that it pretends (as you may still see, if you read the brass-plate in its vestry) to take precedence even of the great Cathedral of St. Paul's—yes, and I must add even of the great Cathedral of Can-

terbury itself ; for there, as the story runs, the first British king, Lucius, lived and was baptized, four hundred years before the conversion of the Saxon Ethelbert, and made it the metropolitan church of his whole kingdom,—the same Lucius, on whom, in his after years, we unexpectedly stumble, if we travel abroad amongst the Alps of Eastern Switzerland, as one of the British missionaries, who gave up his crown to go and convert those wild mountaineers to the faith of Christ.

So much for British times. In Saxon times, how few there are who remember, as they pass through *Addle* Street, in the City, that it derives its name from the palace of the great King *Athelstane*, who broke down the last resistance of the British race—carried the banner of the White Horse of the Saxon to the Land's End in Cornwall, and slew the last King of Cumberland, whose bones lie buried under the huge cairn, between Grasmere and Keswick, called from him *Dunmail Raise*. In Danish times, only a few hundred yards from this,—in the name of the Church of St. Clement *Danes*, you may be reminded of the time when the brief power of that savage nation was overthrown, and the few that, in consideration of their English wives, survived the extirpation of their countrymen, were constrained to live on that spot,—shut out, as you will observe, from the sanctuary of Westminster on the one side, from the city of London on the other,—a desolate, isolated, solitary refuge, as it then was, fit for the dwelling-place and burial-place of an accursed and Pagan race.

Let us pass on to the periods which, though still remote, bring before us more clearly the state of London, and, therefore, of England, in times more within the reach of our own history. I have spoken of the two extreme points of London—the City on the east, and Westminster on the west. Let us follow its growth between the two ;—let us see how far

its gradual expansion has received the impress of the events that have rolled during the course of ages within and around it. Temple Bar, as every one knows, is the limit of the city. From thence to Whitehall was for many centuries a free and open space—not, indeed, uninhabited, but still occupied only by occasional houses or villages, whose existence we can still trace in the names as we pass through what is now one long unbroken mass of streets.

First, what is the great region on one side of which we are now assembled? It is the *Strand*, the shore, of the River Thames—once lined with the palaces of the old nobility, whose beautiful gardens sloped down to the water's edge, where they embarked in their stately barges, and then went to and fro on the river, not yet crowded with its countless steamers, to Lambeth, to Westminster, to the Tower, as their business or pleasure called them. Every name, as you look right and left through the whole length of the Strand is the name or group of names of some illustrious family—Somerset, Cecil, Salisbury, Arundel, Surrey, Norfolk. Two instances only I will select out of the whole mass. One is on the other side of the Strand. If any of you look carefully, you will see in rapid succession *George Street*, *Villiers Street*, *Duke Street*; then a little behind, *Of Alley*,* *Buckingham Street*. Those streets, that alley, those shops, mark the site of what was once one of the most splendid

Since this Lecture was delivered, I have learned that ‘*Of Alley*’ has disappeared. It had become such a haunt of vice that it was deemed advisable to change the very name of the locality; and this change of name and purpose has thus become another incident in the associations of a place which had been for so many generations only linked with the traditions of crime and sin. It has been reserved for our time (if I may use the words of the excellent Vicar of the parish, from whom I derive my information) to hear “the voice of prayer and praise ascending in the immediate vicinity of those ancient resorts of vice,” and to witness “a devout congregation assembled in that long desolate heritage.”

palaces in England—York House, once the palace of the Archbishops of York—then of the wicked *George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham*, whom you may remember in Sir Walter Scott's novel of "Peveril of the Peak," whose names are now preserved, as I have said, in the streets and alley into which his property was afterwards divided. The other instance I will take is that of the place where we are now met. *Exeter Hall* is so called from Burleigh House, afterwards *Exeter House*, which took its name from the Earl of *Exeter*, and his father, the great Lord Burleigh, Prime Minister of Queen Elizabeth, and one of the best and wisest statesmen that this country ever possessed. Between Burleigh Street, which runs on my right, and Exeter Street, which runs on my left, rose the noble mansion which witnessed the consultations of that great man against enemies abroad and rebels at home—Spanish Armada and Irish insurrections—and which established the Church, the Monarchy, and the Empire on their present solid basis. I know not how far historical associations may be supposed to linger round a place which has lost all vestiges of its ancient aspect, but any one who considers how grave and how complicated are the questions which are from time to time discussed within these walls, could wish no better wish for their successful issue than that they might be viewed in the calm spirit of the enlightened and high-minded counsellor who once lived and died within the precincts of this famous Hall.

From the Strand let us advance into what is still an open space. *St. Martin's-in-the-Fields* still reminds you that there was once a time when it stood a village church in green fields; and *Charing Cross* recalls one of the most touching scenes in English history, when the long funeral procession of Eleanor, the beloved wife of King Edward I., who had sucked the poison from his wounded arm in the Holy Land, halted, for the last time, before it reached its final

resting-place in Westminster Abbey, in the little village which from her is said to have taken its name of Charing—*La Chère Reine—The Dear Queen*; and in which was erected the last and most beautiful of the memorials called from her “Queen Eleanor’s crosses.”

There is a statue in Charing Cross which almost irresistibly takes us on a few steps to one of the most historical spots in London. Yesterday—the 30th of January—was the anniversary of that scene which has made Whitehall Place for ever memorable, by the execution of the unfortunate King Charles I. It is one of the few scenes in English history which, in spite of all the changes of time and place, you can still follow step by step from beginning to end. You can go with the king and his escort, from St. James’s Palace, where he slept the night before,—you can cross St. James’s Park with him on that cold, wintry morning,—you can imagine him entering from the Park the long gallery that then ran across the street, joining together the two parts of Whitehall Palace,—you can fancy him passing through the Banqueting Hall, the only part of the Palace that remains, now turned into Whitehall Chapel. You must then imagine him issuing from an aperture made in the wall, east of the Hall. You can see the vast mass of human heads far away to Charing Cross on one side, and to Westminster on the other. You may fancy the old Archbishop Usher sitting, an awe-struck spectator, on the roof of what is now the Admiralty, and fainting away as he saw the axe descend. You may hear the deep groan which burst forth from the whole assembled multitude, as the head of the King—still beloved in spite of his faults and because of his misfortunes—rolled on the scaffold. I will not enter into the various questions which that scene raises; they would furnish a Lecture in themselves. I now only notice it that you may remember that there is the place where you may

form a picture of its outward aspect to your mind's eye. But there is another spot in Whitehall which illustrates so well and so briefly another part of English history, that I must dwell upon it for a moment. Pass behind the Banqueting Hall—step into the open space by Whitehall Gardens. You may possibly have turned in there to look at the house of the great statesman for whose untimely death four years ago all London, as it was truly said, “mourned as one family.” Pass into that open space, and observe another statue. Who is the King there standing in the midst of the palace court? It is the son of Charles—the hardly less unfortunate James II. It is, with one exception, the only statue of that wayward and obstinate king which exists in England. That one exception is over the gateway of the oldest, and, I trust, not the least useful of the colleges of Oxford, where it was placed by the then Jacobite head, Obadiah Walker. But it is not the fact of the statue having been erected either in London or Oxford, but the fact of its continuance in Whitehall, to which I call your attention. It was erected a short time before his flight, but it remained after the occupation of that very same palace by his rival and enemy, William III. I have spoken of the contrast between Paris and London—between France and England. I know of no more striking instance of it than the contrast between the total overthrow of all the monuments of the past dynasties by those who succeed them in France, and the permission accorded to this memorial of James to remain in the heart of the palace by the very man who had driven out the king whom it represents. Look at it in this aspect, and it becomes one of the most instructive—I had almost said one of the most edifying—monuments in London. It tells of the mildness, of the moderation, of the wisdom of our revolution, as compared with those of other countries. It tells us of the regard for law, of the

respect for the past, of the dislike to violent changes which, combined as it is now, and as it was then, with manly love of freedom and independence, constitutes the greatest charm of our national history—the greatest gift that God has bestowed on our national character. Long may we keep it; long may the wise and peaceful lessons of Whitehall Gardens prevail, as they have prevailed, over the bloody and mournful recollections of Whitehall Place!

Let us briefly follow the course of London westward. Gradually it rolled on. What the Strand was once, Grosvenor Square became in later times; and what Grosvenor Square was in the days of our fathers, Belgrave Square is becoming now. But it was long before this was effected. In the seventeenth century, Oxford Road was the highroad running to that ancient seat of learning, through fields and hedges; Piccadilly was the name of a solitary house in the outskirts of the suburbs of London; woodcocks were shot in Conduit Street and Regent Street; the little brook, of which I spoke before, which gives its name to Brook Street, was sufficient, for many years, to prevent the tide of houses and population from advancing to its western bank. Many instances might be given of the great changes which have been effected in the westward part of London even within the memory of man. I will confine myself to one, which I mention partly because it is, perhaps, not generally known, partly because it is, on a small scale, a curious illustration of what often has occurred on a larger scale in the history of men and manners. Any one who has ever gone through the narrow passage which leads between the gardens of Lansdowne House from Berkeley Square to Piccadilly, will remember the iron rails which bar its entrances. It is now rather more than sixty years ago since the incident occurred which led to their erection. A distinguished person, now dead, was sitting in his study in Bolton Street; he heard a great tumult outside—ran

to ask what it was—was told that a mounted highwayman had robbed a gentleman in Piccadilly, and had galloped down Bolton Row, with a crowd behind him, who hoped to catch him under the walls of Lansdowne Gardens. To the surprise of every one, the highwayman darted down the passage, then free of access, climbed up the steps on the further side, and rode off through Berkeley Square, beyond the reach of his pursuers. And it was to prevent the recurrence of such an escape that the iron rails which you now see were placed at the entrance and exit of the narrow passage.

This little incident, curious, in the first instance, as recalling, where you least expect it, an image of past times, brings me to a graver and more important series of historical lessons, which London may well teach us all. The iron rails of Lansdowne Passage are a memorial of a state of insecurity which has now passed away for ever. Whatever other dangers we may encounter in or about London, we shall certainly never again see a mounted highwayman attacking a traveller in Piccadilly, or escaping at full gallop through Berkeley Square. But what this is on a small scale is brought before us on the largest scale elsewhere. Wherever you turn in London, you see what is the most reassuring and encouraging of all sights that History furnishes—the graves, if I may so call them, of gigantic evils, once triumphant, acknowledged, defended—now trodden under foot never to revive. Turn your steps once more eastward, and look up at Temple Bar. *Now* every one hurries through it as fast as the throng will allow. But transport yourselves a hundred years back, and I will venture to say, that there is not one amongst the thousands who now rush through its narrow arches who would not have paused for a moment to look up at the dreadful sight at the top of the gateway. There were fixed the grisly heads of the noblemen and gentlemen con-

cerned in the great Stuart Rebellion of 1745. There they were placed immediately after the execution, and there they remained rotting away year by year, to greet you on your approach to the city. These were the last—our fathers just saw the last fragments of the blanched and broken skulls—and we may be well assured that such a sight will be no more seen there as long as the world lasts. I do not venture into the controversy whether that curious gateway should stand or fall; but so long as it does stand, it is a lasting memorial of one evil, at least, from which we have escaped for ever. We are now sure never more to have rebellions of rival families against the constitutional throne of these realms; we are still more sure never again to see such a bloody and barbarous practice as the exhibition of our enemies' heads in the great thoroughfare of our metropolis.

Go on yet again. Look once more at the Tower, the ancient citadel and palace of English kings. I will not go through its eventful history; I will only ask you to remember what is the chief recollection which it presents. Is it that of the seat of law and justice? Is it of a sovereign reigning happily and fearlessly in the midst of a virtuous court and a loving family? No; it is almost from first to last a monument of war, of oppression, of injustice. Built as a fortress to keep the citizens of London in check, always uniting within its walls the prison hard by the palace, and close beside its walls the place of public execution, there is, perhaps, no spot in England which conveys so striking a picture of the violence of the middle ages, which some call happy and holy—of the odious union of law with injustice, and monarchy with tyranny, out of which, by long and terrible struggles, our present good constitution has worked itself out. Of the many celebrated persons whose names you see scratched on the guard-room of the Tower, and whose mangled remains lie buried in the Tower Chapel, how few were traitors—how

many were martyrs! Of the many deaths within and without the walls of that stately edifice, under the sanction, almost under the eye, of archbishops, and statesmen, and kings, how few were righteous executions—how many were judicial murders, nay, even midnight assassinations!

Once more. Turn northward from the Tower, pass beyond the limits of the city walls, and look out on the vacant space of Smithfield. It is now nearly three hundred years ago since the beginning of those terrible days when the fires were lit opposite the church of St. Bartholomew, of which the ashes remained even till our own time, in which perished the Protestant victims of Queen Mary's cruel persecution. The very thought of those dreadful scenes still rouses the indignation of every Englishman. But it is not for this that I now call your attention to them; it is to remind you that the fires then lighted are now, and have been long, extinguished, never again to be kindled; that this great evil of burning men and women for differing in opinion from ourselves is one which we may be quite sure will never return.

I dwell upon all these cases for two reasons; first, as a reason for thankfulness, and, secondly, as an example and encouragement. We shall never again see the gory heads of rebel noblemen looking down upon us from Temple Bar; we shall never again hear of kings murdered by their cousins and uncles in the Tower; we shall never again see Reformers burnt alive in Smithfield. Let us thank God with all our hearts that from these evils He, through the progress of His Providence, through the workings of His good Spirit in the hearts of men and of nations, has set us for ever free. They are gone; we have left them very far behind us; with them, at least, we need trouble ourselves no more; to guard against them *now*, to declaim against them *now*, is like putting up crossbars at the corners of our streets to prevent the escape

of mounted robbers from Piccadilly. But do they teach us nothing for the future? Yes. They teach us that as those evils, great in their day, have now been put down entirely by those who have gone before us, so evils as great in our own day may and must be put down by ourselves and our children. I need not name them. Every one who lives in this metropolis must know of evils, social and moral,—in his neighbourhood, in his calling, in the streets and the alleys of London,—sufficiently great to require all the energy of man, and all the grace of God, to subdue or even to mitigate their power. Think not that such evils are insuperable. Be not discouraged; remember that evils as great have fallen; remember the heads on Temple Bar; remember the murders on Tower Hill; remember the fires of Smithfield.

And remember also—which brings me to a no less important, though more pleasing, lesson of the same kind—remember the good that, even amongst all this evil, existed in former times—the salt of England, the salt of London then—the warning to us how we of this age may be the strength of the generations which are yet to come. There are many spots to which I might call your memory, as the monuments of the good of former times—the bright spots of Modern History. Recollections of Samuel Johnson meet us almost everywhere; John Milton lies buried in St. Giles's Church; John Bunyan in Bunhill Fields; John Wesley by the City Road; Oliver Cromwell under Tyburn Turnpike. But there are two such places, which above all will occur—two which are happily the most conspicuous objects to every one in the whole metropolis—the sight of which we can never lose—the Abbey of Westminster, the Cathedral of St. Paul's. Each of them in itself is a study of Modern History. Any one who goes through the tombs of those magnificent churches, and asks himself who and what were those whose remains are there interred—what they

did for England and the world—why they are buried within those walls—would acquire a far more solid and lively knowledge of English history than by reading many books and hearing many lectures. But I confine myself to the general fact. There you see what can and has been done by the genius, the courage, the wisdom, the piety of Englishmen in times past—there you may think what may and ought to be done by the same means in times future. It is now a little more than a year since the vast majority, I doubt not, of those who now hear me witnessed one of the most instructive, one of the most historical scenes that this city and this nation has ever beheld. You saw the long funeral procession defiling through park, and street, and square, and strand ; you saw London turned into a vast amphitheatre of gazing multitudes—of silent and respectful mourners ; you saw the remains of England's greatest soldier carried to his last resting-place beneath the dome of St. Paul's. Such a sight was instructive, if only as helping you to imagine and understand like events in former times. But it is instructive also, as showing what one man can do—what gratitude one man can earn—how much the rough and simple virtues of a man devoted to his public duty can avail against the evils and difficulties of his time.

It is no abrupt transition from the great and good men who sleep in Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's, to fix your thoughts for a moment on those buildings themselves. They are, as I have said, the most conspicuous edifices of our city. Let us ask, as the concluding lesson which London teaches us, what we may learn, as often as we look on those noble towers or on that majestic dome. Look at them well. Their outward aspect conveys, as in a parable, one of the most important of all the truths that Modern History can teach us. Nothing can be more unlike than their forms, either in conception or execution. They re-

present the two extremes of history and of architecture. One is all Gothic, the offspring of mediæval and romantic ages—the masterpiece of bishops, and monks, and crusaders. The other, though first founded in remote antiquity, yet dates its fame from the time when the Reformers preached at Paul's Cross ; and its present building is the highest result of that style of classical architecture which was introduced by the same causes that produced the Reformation, and which a century later was carried into execution by the great mechanical genius of Sir Christopher Wren. There was a time when he who admired the Abbey could have never dreamed of a building like St. Paul's ; or, again, when he who admired St. Paul's, looked down with contempt on the Abbey, as Gothic and barbarian. Such prejudices have now passed away, and there is, I trust, no one here present who has not the capacity to enjoy them, and admire them, *both*. But what we feel with regard to the different manifestations of beauty in architecture, this is what History ought to teach us in regard to the different manifestations of goodness and truth in men and in history. You may remember the old proverb about robbing Peter to pay Paul. That proverb took its first origin from the time when the revenues of the Abbey of *St. Peter*, at Westminster, were transferred to the Cathedral of *St. Paul*, in London. But it has a much more extensive application, of which those two noble edifices may always serve to remind us. There are a thousand ways in which we may be tempted to rob Peter for paying Paul—or to rob Paul for paying Peter. We are tempted to do so, if, as I said, we refuse, in our admiration of one kind of beauty, to recognise any beauty of another kind. We may be tempted still more seriously to do so, if in our study of political or religious questions, ancient or modern, past or present, we insist on dwelling only on one side, and never looking at the

other. This is, indeed, in the highest sense, 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'; it is refusing to acknowledge that variety of character, of taste, of opinion, which God himself has forced upon us, not only in common history, but in the most sacred history of all. St. Peter and St. Paul were both alike apostles and servants of their common Lord, however differing in much beside; and we shall read history to no purpose if we cannot, in like manner, admire the various forms of goodness in later times, acknowledging the mixture of truth and error, of strength and of weakness, in each, and the higher good in all. And to that higher good, each in its different way, St. Peter's at Westminster, and St. Paul's in London, point surely and truly, if we will but see it. Their foundations are on the graves of the good and wise of former ages; but their massive structure—their towering height—their majestic size—the Gothic pinnacles of the one—the golden Cross of the other—remind us not only of what is around us, but of Who is above us—remind us of that Eternal Power, and Strength, and Wisdom, which is above and beyond all the roar and turmoil of the world below.

Such were the monuments which, of old, our fathers reared to remind us of that Divine Presence. It may be that such monuments will be reared no more; that the age for erecting such outward memorials of the unseen world is past and gone. Yet, if this be so, the more need to make the best of what we have—the more need, above all, to endeavour to do in our day, and in our way, what in their day and their way our fathers did before us. When I think of the overwhelming greatness of this city, of which I spoke at the beginning of my Lecture—when I look upon the faces of the rising generation now gathered before me, it is impossible to believe that the noble works of Modern History are finished. There are still needed, and there may still be achieved, for

London and for England, good deeds, as vast in dimension, as grand in design, as Abbey or Cathedral that ever yet were raised. Out of the vast masses of your and our poorer brethren, through the examples and exertions of those whom I am now addressing, the true Temple and Church of God must be built up and renewed amongst us. In that great work may you and all of us be enabled to bear a part, by those only means which, under God, can accomplish it—by those only means which History and Revelation alike enforce upon us—by hope and humility, by patience and forbearance, by the energy of Christian faith, and the comprehensiveness of Christian love.

NOTE.

FOR most of the facts to which I have alluded, it is superfluous to refer to any more recondite source than Mr. Cunningham's excellent "Handbook of London." Any one who wishes to obtain a more general view of the city in its successive stages may turn with advantage to Stow's "Survey" and Pennant's "Account of London," to the curious contemporary description of London in the twelfth century by Fitzstephen, and to Mr. Macaulay's celebrated Chapter on the State of Society in the first volume of his "History of England."

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